

**To:** Eric.M.Johnson@thomsonreuters.com[Eric.M.Johnson@thomsonreuters.com]  
**From:** Mylott, Richard  
**Sent:** Fri 8/7/2015 1:08:44 AM  
**Subject:** RE: statement on mine plug

Steps have been taken to secure drinking water and the county is advising people to avoid recreational contact with the river as a precaution. While those measures put us in a good place in terms of human health and exposure, we will be assessing water quality over the next several days, including any impacts to fish and aquatic life.

**From:** Eric.M.Johnson@thomsonreuters.com [mailto:Eric.M.Johnson@thomsonreuters.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 06, 2015 6:58 PM  
**To:** Mylott, Richard  
**Subject:** RE: statement on mine plug

Is this dangerous to people? Is this true:

Don Cooper, emergency manager in San Juan County, said people should not panic because the EPA had told the county the spill would not harm people and that the primary pollutants were iron and zinc.

**From:** Mylott, Richard [mailto:Myllott.Richard@epa.gov]  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 06, 2015 5:31 PM  
**To:** Johnson, Eric M. (Reuters News)  
**Subject:** RE: statement on mine plug

**Eric—hope this helps. Rich Mylott**

### **EPA Statement on Gold King Mine Release—August 6**

On August 5, an EPA team working to investigate and address contamination at the Gold King Mine in San Juan County, Colo. unexpectedly triggered a large release of mine waste water into

the upper portions of Cement Creek. Initial estimates are that the release contained approximately 1M gallons of water that was held behind unconsolidated debris near an abandoned mine portal. There were several workers at the site at the time of the breach, all were unharmed.

Following the release, the Colorado Department of Public Health and the Environment notified water users downstream so they could take appropriate steps to turn off intakes until the contaminated water passes.

The primary environmental concern is the pulse of contaminated water containing sediment and metals flowing as an orange-colored discharge downstream through Cement Creek and into the Animas River. The water associated with the release is obvious and highly discolored. As a precaution, EPA recommends that recreational users of the Animas River avoid contact with or use of the river until the pulse of mine water passes. Over the next several days, EPA teams will be sampling and investigating downstream locations to confirm that the release has passed and poses no additional concerns for aquatic life or water users. EPA will also be assessing damage near the mine portal and any residual releases of water at the mine site.

EPA's team was working with heavy equipment to secure and consolidate a safe way to enter the mine and access contaminated water when the breach occurred. The project was intended to pump and treat the water and reduce metals pollution flowing out of the mine into the Cement Creek watershed.

**From:** [Eric.M.Johnson@thomsonreuters.com](mailto:Eric.M.Johnson@thomsonreuters.com) [<mailto:Eric.M.Johnson@thomsonreuters.com>]  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 06, 2015 6:27 PM  
**To:** Mylott, Richard  
**Subject:** statement on mine plug

Hi Richard, I am looking for statement information on the mine plug incident. Can you call or email asap?

.....  
**Eric M. Johnson**  
Correspondent, Seattle

Thomson Reuters

M: +1 206 707 1218

O: +1 206 225 2936

Twitter: @ByEricJohnson

<http://www.reuters.com/news/us>